

Recon & Report

Siege Preparations

In the six months since the Battle of Endor, news of the Emperor's death and the defeat of the Imperial fleet has spread from the Expansion Regions to the Core Worlds, bringing confusion and conflict. Some Imperial military personnel have abandoned their posts, either to reinforce defensive positions around strategic targets, or to join their commanders in carving out a portion of the Empire for themselves (in the Emperor's name, of course). Others have returned to the Core Worlds, preferring to make a last stand with the Imperial Advisors who have assumed the Emperor's role on Coruscant.

The Empire is in disarray and Imperial forces are scrambling to protect themselves and their resources. While this might seem like the best time to attack in the Empire's moment of confusion, the New Republic must approach the task of destroying the remnants of the Empire with caution.

Several high-level generals and admirals have accepted the leadership of the Imperial Advisors, who recently forced power-monger Sate Pestage, Imperial Grand Vizier, into exile. Operatives have reported hearing rumors that the advisors have sealed themselves inside the Imperial Palace on Coruscant. Other operatives have managed to damage or destroy several HoloNet installations, which were apparently very active with communications from Coruscant to Imperial commanders stationed throughout the galaxy. It seems the Imperial Advisors are preparing for a siege against major Core World systems.

About half the remaining Imperial naval forces have been redeployed to defend key systems throughout the Core Worlds. Most of these systems have starship repair and construction facilities, heavy industry which supports the Imperial war machine, and high productivity agricultural worlds. The advisors have also ordered contingents of Star Destroyers to patrol certain systems which have little strategic value, yet would damage Imperial morale should they fall to New Republic forces.

Corellia and Kuat

Perhaps the most fortified systems we encountered on our wanderings were in the Corellian and Kuat Sectors. The Imperial Advisors are concerned that their power would evaporate if the Empire lost its ability to construct and repair the navy's starships. Kuat Drive Yard's facilities and Corellian Engineering Corporation's stardocks are viewed as the most likely targets of an imminent assault by a New Republic fleet.

There are at least 15 Imperial Star Destroyers patrolling the Kuat system itself, and 25 patrolling the Corellian system. Numerous smaller vessels -- Dreadnaughts, Strike cruisers, and Interdictor cruisers -- also patrol these systems. The schedules and routes of TIE fighter patrols are changed daily. Any ships entering or leaving these systems are boarded and thoroughly searched. Recently intercepted transmissions from Coruscant suggest that the Super Star Destroyer *Aggressor* has been recalled from the Inner Rim with its escort of five more Star Destroyers to help defend the Corellian shipyards.

Admiral Jaeff is currently in command of the Imperial forces protecting the Corellian shipyards, but it is assumed he will be reporting to the more cunning Admiral Roek when the *Aggressor* arrives. We were unable to learn who was commanding the Kuat defense fleet, but rumors indicate he is a Kuat native.

While the Empire has loosened most of its control of the planets themselves, any starship facilities, both planetside and orbital, have undergone an extreme security crackdown. Any workers of questionable loyalty to the Empire, from chief engineers and security commanders to supply clerks and hull welders, have been imprisoned or relieved of their duties, replaced by Imperial Navy technical personnel.

Rebel operatives on Kuat have learned that every stardock and vessel under construction has been rigged to blow if the defense fleet commander issues the order to scuttle the shipyards. While some areas have been rigged with any available explosives, the arrival of a team of power core specialists from Corellia could indicate that most of the scuttling will be done by overloading the cores of stardock power facilities. We can certainly assume similar precautions have been taken with the Corellian shipyards.

In addition to the high concentration of Imperial Star Destroyers in the Kuat and Corellian systems, other shipyard facilities throughout those sectors have been fortified with anywhere from two to five Star Destroyers and numerous smaller naval vessels.

Kelada

Kelada is an important system for the Empire because it is a major producer of repulsorlift and Imperial walker components. The Imperial Advisors are especially worried of losing Arakyd's giant assembly factory, which creates components for and assembles Imperial speeder bikes and other repulsorcraft.

A contingent of 10 Star Destroyers patrols the system with a myriad of smaller support craft. Imperial stormtroopers have been added to the regular starport security forces, and customs officers have cracked down on all regulations to prevent saboteurs and New Republic sympathizers from halting production of components necessary for the Imperial Army to maintain its grasp on the many worlds still under Imperial control.

Construction of repulsorlift and walker systems has increased dramatically. Perhaps the Imperial Advisors know they cannot possibly control the galaxy using their shrinking fleets, and are attempting to give Imperial Army equipment priority to maintain ground-based control of less vital worlds.

Where Kelada once had a peaceful balance between industry and the ecology (including several large forested regions and a large savannah), now that balance is threatened. The forests and plains are being cleared for more industrial facilities to support the Empire's defensive efforts. Before abandoning some worlds, Imperial engineers dismantled factories and shipped major components and raw materials to systems closer to the Core Worlds. Several factories are already under construction on Kelada using many of these components.

As a defense against orbital attack on these factories, Imperial engineers have already set up a KDY v-150 Planet Defender near the large industrial wasteland quickly growing outside Kelada starport. Engineers are also preparing a site for a planetary-scale shield generator nearby.

Sluis Sector

The Sluis sector contains several other key shipyard facilities, including the extensive Sluis Van stardocks. The Empire has not concentrated much naval power here, preferring to protect starship facilities closer to the Core Worlds. This sector in particular is also closer to other systems where the New Republic holds greater influence.

Despite thinning Imperial support, the Sluissi have not yet rebelled. We spent several days meeting with Luiss Nevs, an influential member of the Sluis Van Congregate, urging him to help oust the Empire. He explained that the Sluissi are caught in a dilemma. The Empire is their primary patron. Imperial funds keep the shipyards running. To turn away Imperial ships would be to turn away 90 percent of their business.

The Sluis Van Congregate has been debating whether or not to publicly lodge complaints against the Imperial Navy for labor contract violations. This debate could last months, and is not the sort of rebellion which would deny the Empire use of Sluis Sector facilities. The Sluissi are terminally indecisive on whether to support the Empire or the New Republic.

Other factions among the Sluissi each have their own slant on rebellion. They do not seem prone to do anything about it now other than debate the possibilities and the ramifications of certain very passive actions.

These starship facilities could be taken by force. They are not rigged to be easily scuttled and they are not as heavily protected as Corellia and Kuat (there are perhaps one or two Star Destroyers for each major facility, and maybe four at the Sluis Van shipyards).

Diplomacy, preferably carried out by high-level New Republic diplomats, would seem to be the proper Sluissi solution.

Salliche

Besides fortifying systems providing military might in starships and war machines, the Imperial Advisors are improving security on several key agricultural worlds. Those fertile worlds nearest Coruscant are coming under greater military scrutiny than before. Salliche is receiving the most attention, since it is the home of the Salliche Ag Corporation, which administers many agricultural planets throughout the Core Worlds.

The governing body of Salliche, the Legislature, has been disbanded. Now an Imperial Moff is heading the incredibly complex bureaucracy which keeps the system and the Salliche Ag Corporation running smoothly. Major officers and bureaucrats have been replaced by Moff Gegren Throsen's senior staff, while stormtroopers have replaced the corporate troops which protected company facilities. Bureaucrats who openly challenge Imperial rule or who are caught discussing revolt have already been jailed in hastily built prison facilities outside Salliche starport.

Moff Throsen has sent the equivalent of an Imperial garrison and two Star Destroyers to each of the 18 worlds under the Salliche Ag Corporation's control. In three of those systems --Yulant, Ruan and Broest -- workers have already revolted against increased Imperial control, burning crops, scuttling hydroponics facilities, and bombing storage warehouses and processing plants. Previously-established Rebel cells helped instigate those revolts, and they will continue to depend on shipments of arms to resist an imminent Imperial crackdown.

Throsen's takeover was unexpected and hasty. It created a discontent crowd of unemployed bureaucrats and corporate security soldiers on Salliche itself, and showed the true nature of the tyrannical Empire to citizens.

Several New Republic agents are working with these disgruntled factions to stir an all-out rebellion. Until the Imperial presence is wiped from Salliche, these groups plan to ambush key Imperial personnel, bomb offices which help expedite the distribution of food products to other Core Worlds, and space-jack freighter convoys filled with supplies. Throsen already has his hands full keeping Salliche's bureaucratic machine running -- the rebels will help hinder his efforts and pave the way for liberation by the New Republic.

Chandrila

Although Chandrila is not a key strategic world in the crumbling Empire's defense, seven Imperial Star Destroyers have been deployed in picket formation around the planet. Informers report that ground troops have been completely withdrawn and all Imperial facilities cleared out and abandoned. However, starship traffic to or from any starport on Chandrila has been forbidden, the Star Destroyers and their support vessels mercilessly enforcing the blockade.

In the absence of Imperial forces on the planet's surface, a provisional government allied with the New Republic has been set up. This government is maintaining order on Chandrila, but has little power over the Imperial blockade. We were not able to successfully escape from the system with their ambassador.

Our intelligence sources could not confirm the reason for this blockade, and especially why the seven badly-needed Star Destroyers are in a system which is clearly of little military value. Rumors from other informants in the Core Worlds indicate the Imperial Advisors are following a plan initially devised by Sate Pestage to hold Chandrila hostage in case New Republic forces threatened Coruscant. Orbital strikes from the seven Star Destroyers would cause uncountable deaths and immense destruction.

While an all-out assault on the picket ships would be futile until New Republic fleets grow in strength, the Star Destroyers could be diverted to more important targets depending on New Republic military actions.

Imperial Warlords

With the absence of one true heir to the Emperor's power and the cessation of HoloNet communications from Coruscant, several Imperial warlords have risen to power. These ambitious Moffs and admirals saw the Emperor's demise as their own opportunity to seize power and run their sectors and fleets as they pleased and to their own benefit. Imperial warlords are concentrated in the Mid-Rim, with a handful taking advantage of the chaos in the Expansion Region and the Inner Rim Planets.

Many of these charismatic leaders are motivated by their own lust for power, while others feel they can do a better job resisting the rise of the New Republic than a fragmented Empire. Despite their motivations, these warlords have brought greater oppression and hardship to the systems they rule, taxing both the populations and the resources to further their own war machines.

Those fighting under these Imperial warlords believe they are serving the cause of the Empire by constricting their holds on systems within their patrol sectors. The true intentions behind secrets, and are kept at all costs from the rank and file Imperial soldier. Several warlords have already clashed over key industrial worlds bordering their spheres of control. A common explanation commanders give when Imperial warships attack other Imperial vessels is that they are engaging an Imperial warlord no longer loyal to the Empire. While this is true, they fail to mention (or don't even realize) that they, too, are part of a renegade warlord's forces.

Warlord Resources

Imperial warlords concentrate most of their military power in those systems they formerly ruled or patrolled. Here they are most familiar with the temperament of local peoples, the strategic importance of their systems, and advantages and disadvantages of traveling and waging war within a sector.

The warlord forces we observed were usually of two varieties. Each important system in a sector (any with agricultural or industrial value) was protected by a small fleet of ships which blockaded the planet, regulated freighter traffic, and protected against pirate raids and other warlords. Each Imperial warlord also kept at least one standing fleet to aid in defending key systems and in carrying out campaigns against loyal Imperial forces, the New Republic, and other warlords.

Using small fleets comprised of smaller capital ships (*Carrack*-class cruisers, Strike cruisers, system patrol craft and Dreadnaughts) and headed by one or two Star Destroyers, ambitious or desperate warlords often raid other systems governed by other warlords, the New Republic and even the Empire. The targets of these raids are often supply stations, factories and shipyards which provide resources unavailable in a warlord's home sector.

These raids also provoke attacks between warlords as well as loyal Imperial forces. So far New Republic ships have not retaliated against these raids. Perhaps it is wise simply to raise defenses, allowing Imperial and warlord forces to undermine each other's power.

Warlord Allies

Some warlords have joined with previously unacceptable Imperial allies: bands of smugglers, crime lords, pirates and mercenaries. Most of these alliances are sealed with credits, but others are sealed with certain privileges. Crime lords are allowed to continue and increase illegal activity (unless to the detriment of the warlord), pirates are supplied with ships and weapons to prey on enemy vessels, and smugglers are paid handsomely to steal valuable cargoes and misinform rival warlords.

Some warlords have banded together, pooling their resources and military might to control a small region of space. By cooperating, they become almost as powerful as loyal Imperial forces defending the Core Worlds.

There are many warlords busily setting up their own independent empires, including Captain Iolan Gendarr (commander of the Star Destroyer *Reliance*), Moff Par Lankin of Lambda sector, and Admiral Gaen Drommel, who has control of the Super Star Destroyer *Guardian*.

Many of these men and other warlords have control of small fleets which form the backbone of their strength.

Free Systems

The abrupt changes in Imperial military deployment has brought chaos to many worlds. To free up personnel, equipment and vessels for the Empire's defense, many commanders have withdrawn military, diplomatic and bureaucratic personnel from worlds with lesser strategic importance. Some systems are left with little or no government at all, and no protection against warlords and independent marauders.

The Imperial Advisors and their strategic staffs examined which systems they could afford to abandon when withdrawing forces to defend the Core Worlds. Most of these abandoned systems are located in the Mid-Rim and Expansion Region, where New Republic and Imperial warlord activity has steadily increased.

Provisional Governments

The Empire formerly played a great role in government in these systems. In many cases Imperial forces were the only means of defense, and Imperial personnel saturated the layers of bureaucracy. The Empire controlled, administered and staffed most Imperial and standard class starports, and in some cases policed cities and operated government agencies.

Economic Troubles

Systems freed from Imperial rule were also freed of all Imperial business. Factories were shut down or scuttled, and the entertainment districts of major starports suffered a drop in business without droves of off-duty Imperial military personnel spending credits in their spare time.

Many systems the Empire abandoned depended heavily on supporting the Imperial military machine for their economies. These worlds were not great players in galactic commerce, and based their economic well-being on local resources and industry. Now they face unemployment problems and a declining economy.

With the Empire creating an economic void, these systems are ripe for the New Republic. Many seek guidance in forming new governments, and they desperately need outside business to boost their economies.

Successful Free Systems

The most encouraging region abandoned by the Empire is the Boeus sector in the Expansion Region. Darvon Jewett, the charismatic governor of that sector, turned to the New Republic when the Imperial military withdrew. Jewett managed to retain several Imperial capital ships for local defense (some say the crews of these vessels mutinied on hearing of the Emperor's death and joined Jewett's cause). He has also managed to keep trade and communication lines open between systems in his sector, maintaining both services and economies.

Kaal is another example of a system which survived after the Empire left. It was formerly a major food production world and a resort for Imperial personnel on leave in the Yushan Sector. When the Empire retreated, local crime lord Tirgee Benyalle stepped in and began running Kaal's government. She administered Kaal's agricultural industry, which harvested and processed food products from the planet's immense oceans. Benyalle was able to provide several small capital ships to defend the system from attacks by pirates and Imperial forces, and guard food shipments headed to other systems which could afford her high prices.

During our visit to Kaal we discovered Benyalle was running the agricultural production rather efficiently, and we heard disturbing rumors she was interested in selling the produce to the Empire or nearby Imperial warlords.

Provisional governments have sprung up on these planets in the absence of Imperial rule. These hastily formed groups are trying to maintain services provided by the Empire. Some are creating their own groups -- starport

authorities, police militias and the like -- to fill these gaps, while others are hiring mercenary groups and private corporations to run these services.

On a few worlds, crime lords, pirates and other fringe groups have assumed the role of government. In these cases, such groups are the only ones capable of providing the necessary services to maintain order.

Supply and Communication

Abandoned systems depended heavily on Imperially influenced or controlled corporations to supply goods not normally available to that system. A heavily industrialized system depended on these corporations to import food, while agricultural worlds required new machinery and parts to maintain their economies.

These supply companies, often under pressure from the Empire, responded to the need to supply the Core Worlds and support the Imperial military machine. They stopped freighter runs to these systems when their primary customer -- the Empire -- retreated.

Free-traders quickly cashed in on the needs of abandoned systems, but could not come close to filling the market with the quality of imports these worlds required. Piracy also denies certain vital imports to those systems without local defense fleets to guard against marauders.

These worlds were also cut off from the rest of the galaxy when communications -- previously monopolized by the Empire -- stopped. HoloNet stations were sabotaged by New Republic operatives to slow communications between Imperial forces, but this also severed the lines to abandoned systems.

Free-traders are helping to re-establish communication lines by carrying messages between systems. Some freighter captains are making tidy sums carrying diplomats from these systems to meet with New Republic forces, or to band together systems within a sector or along certain trade routes.

Recommendations

After examining the situation throughout the former Empire, I recommend several strategies to continue to undermine Imperial power. While a military campaign will eventually be necessary, it is not the first step.

The New Republic should contact worlds freed when Imperial forces retreated. These systems are desperately seeking guidance to solve government and economic problems. Now they are isolated systems struggling to survive. As part of the New Republic, they would join the galactic economy and contribute to the downfall of the Empire.

The rogue Imperial warlords are a different problem. The most likely solution would be military action against them, but this could be costly in terms of personnel and ships. I recommend infiltrating their systems with New Republic Intelligence operatives to disinform them of our own strategic plans, stir up the populace against their continued tyranny, and encourage infighting between warlords by spreading rumors and false intelligence reports. By setting these warlords against each other, and by stirring up discontent on their home systems, we would significantly undermine their power before attacking in their time of weakness.

The remaining loyal Imperial forces pose the greatest challenge to the New Republic. Our primary targets should be shipyard facilities, but we should start small. By taking smaller stardocks in the Mid-Rim and Expansion Region, we can slowly build a fleet and deny the Empire ships. While our ultimate goal would be the Corellian and Kuat shipyards, these will not be taken by direct force. We must try to infiltrate these facilities, disable their ability to scuttle ships and stardocks, and carefully plan an assault.

New Republic Intelligence should play a vital role in all these actions. An uninformed or misinformed force will fail.

Addendum: Correspondence

To: General Airen Cracken, New Republic Intelligence

From: Dirk Harkness, Black Curs Base

Regarding: Coreward Reconnaissance

During the past six months, a team of close associates and I have been wandering the space lanes between the Expansion Region and the Core Worlds, quietly observing the state of the crumbling Empire as news of the Emperor's death made its way to Coruscant. The Battle of Endor has had greater implications than we imagined: the Imperial military machine is in disarray and many worlds are rebelling against their oppressive overlords.

During our travels, we met with other Rebel operatives and friendly government and military leaders, collecting information on the status of Imperial military forces, sector governments, and tactical objectives. I have summarized our findings in the following report.

I believe the New Republic can use a combination of diplomatic and military tactics to wage a campaign against the fragments of the Empire, with the ultimate goal of reaching Coruscant. By liberating Imperial worlds and capturing facilities of strategic importance, the Provisional Council could be meeting in the Emperor's palace within four years. My people remain at your disposal should you ever require any independent intelligence work.

With respect,
Dirk Harkness

To: Mon Mothma, Commander-in-Chief
From: General Airen Cracken, New Republic Intelligence
Regarding: Harkness Report

Please circulate this reconnaissance report among the members of the Inner Council and others involved with planning the campaign against the Empire. Although Harkness is no longer an official member of New Republic Intelligence, I believe this report to be fairly reliable. Harkness has no love for the Empire, and wants to see it crushed.

After reviewing his report, it's obvious we must increase Intelligence activity. I am requesting additional support from the Inner Council to train and supply operatives to infiltrate Imperial systems. These agents -- like Harkness -- must be our eyes and ears, guiding our military decisions and helping to undermine the Empire from within.

Should you have any questions I will try to answer them the best I can. Should you doubt the validity of Harkness' report or loyalty, I would be more than happy to vouch for him.

General Airen Cracken

To: General Airen Cracken, Intelligence
From: General Crix Madine
Regarding: Harkness Report

Harkness' reconnaissance is fairly complete regarding starship deployment and overall politics in the crumbling Empire. However, his observations of ground troops and Imperial Army forces are obviously lacking. Should the New Republic move to take systems from Imperial hands, we must know more about the military situation on the surface of these worlds.

In addition to infiltrating future targets with intelligence operatives, I advise sending undercover teams of commandos to undermine Imperial industrial and military power on the worlds they still occupy.

General Madine

To: General Airen Cracken, Intelligence
From: Mon Mothma, Commander-in-Chief
Regarding: Harkness Report

Any accurate information the New Republic receives is appreciated. Harkness seems to have summarized the situation in the Empire well, but more specific information is required before we plan and execute an offensive.

I would like to stress his recommendation that we establish diplomatic and economic ties with systems abandoned in the Imperial retreat. We must welcome these systems into our New Republic and help them throw off the yoke of Imperial oppression. Their support will help us in our struggle to return peace and order to the galaxy.

Mon Mothma

To: General Airen Cracken, Intelligence

From: Borsk Fey'lya, Bothan Councilor, New Republic Provisional Government

Regarding: Harkness Report

I am appalled that you are giving so much consideration to an intelligence report from a rogue and mercenary. Harkness disappeared unexpectedly after the Battle of Endor, and now he suddenly returns bearing seemingly accurate and detailed information regarding Imperial forces.. How do you know he isn't simply misinforming us?

Everyone knows the campaign to end the Empire will be won through superior intelligence efforts. Harkness is simply trying to divert our energies by suggesting additional means for undermining the Empire.

Borsk Fey'lya

This first appeared as a feature article by Peter Schweighofer in Star Wars Adventure Journal #2, published by West End Games in 1994.